THE
# CATHOLIC RADICAL

*"...to foster a society based on creed instead of greed."* Peter Maurin

**April/May 2021** ***Price: For whatever it's worth.***

# Radical Love

**by Claire Schaeffer-Duffy**

"What we need is radical love," said Ruby Nell Sales. The suggestion coming from her surprised me. In August of 1965, a White segregationist shot at Ruby, who is Black, as she tried to enter the Varner Cash Grocery Store in Hayneville, Alabama to buy a Coca Cola. Jonathan Myrick Daniels, a White seminarian and freedom fighter, shoved her out of the way and was killed instead. He was 26 years old, she 17. Tom Coleman, an unemployed highway worker, newly deputized, also shot and severely wondered Father Richard Morrisoe, a Catholic priest from Chicago. At the sound of the gun blast, Ruby thought she had died. She stayed mute for six months, but testified at the trial, despite death threats. An all White, all male jury acquitted Mr. Coleman, a decision Alabama's attorney general called "a callous disregard for human life." Mr. Coleman never spent a day in jail.

*Radical love?*

The recommendation has no manual. Its expression is too particular to person and circumstance. All we have are the stories and these rarely make the daily news. Divisions and conflicts provide the exhilarating read. And let's give credit where credit is due. Satan is the more intriguing character in **Paradise Lost** than God who is reliably good. Hate animates. It puts fire in the belly and keeps you decisive. "Good guys" vs "bad guys." Those definitive categories sure come in handy when the world appears to be falling apart. Love, on the other hand, can be worrisomely expansive, or boring. It's also seditious.

Jonathan Daniels did not expect to get shot. "Should be out in 2-3 days and back to work," he wrote in a letter to his mother from the Hayneville jail days before he died.

*Brain Kavanagh*

The 1961 valedictorian of Virginia Military Institute looked forward to savoring a martini with Mum whenever he returned home to Keene, New Hampshire. He had studied for a year at Harvard Law School, considered a career in medicine or writing, had a crisis of faith then a conversion that brought him to the Episcopal seminary in Cambridge, Massachusetts. On August 14, 1965 he, Ruby, and Father Morrisoe, joined a group of Black teens picketing White-owned stores in Fort Deposit, Alabama. They spent six miserable days in the Hayneville jail – Vile food, no fans to break the heat; Ruby and the other girls worrying about getting raped – before they were mysteriously released (No bond paid or required.), the afternoon so hot you could see the vapor seeping from the pavement. That walk to the Cash Grocery

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# Israeli Call for Change

*Editor's Note: The following statement was released in January 2021 by B'Tselem, Israel's most prestigious human rights organization. B'Tselem, in Hebrew, means "in the image of God."*

Over 14 million people live between the Jordan River and the Mediterranean Sea, roughly half of them Jews and half Palestinians. It is commonly held that the area is divided into two separate regimes: Within the sovereign borders of Israel – a permanent democratic regime governing about 9 million people, all Israeli citizens. Within the territories Israel occupied in 1967 – a temporary military regime ruling over some 5 million Palestinian subjects.

This accepted distinction ignores crucial facts: that this 'temporary' reality has persisted for more than 50 years; that hundreds of thousands of Jewish settlers live in more than 280 permanent settlements in the West Bank; and that Israel has *de jure* annexed East Jerusalem, and *de facto* annexed the rest of the West Bank.

Most importantly, it obscures the fact that the entire area is organized under one principle: advancing and perpetuating the supremacy of one group – Jews – over another – Palestinians.

This policy is implemented by engineering space. For Jews, the entire area is open and contiguous (except Gaza). For Palestinians, it is divided into separate units

Within Israel's sovereign territory, Palestinians make up some 17% of the state's citizenry. As Israeli citizens, they are afforded certain rights, yet these are not equal to those of their Jewish

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# Love

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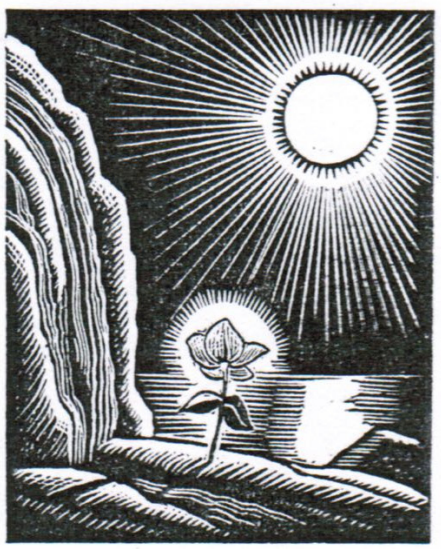
store was just to buy some cold drinks.

A White man with all the privileges life can provide, Jonathan was "the king who turned away from the table," Ruby said. What made him do that? Some think it was Mary's Magnificat, which he chanted nightly, or Martin Luther King Jr's televised appeal to come to Selma that put a secret humming in his ear. Sent him South. Love can be sneaky like that.



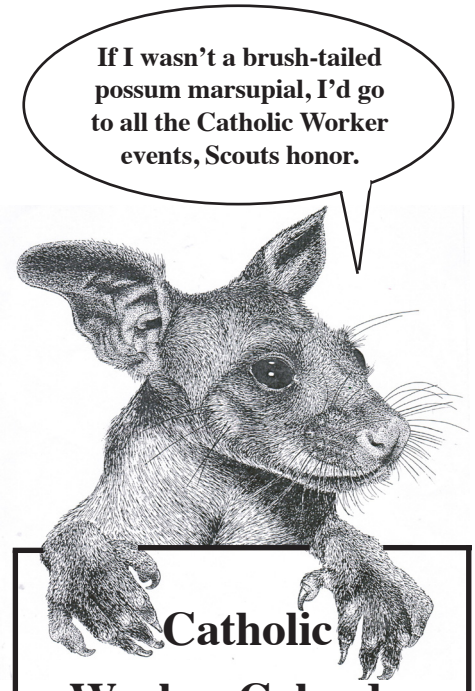
*Rockwell Kent*

It can set your heart a-thrumming so you no longer calculate the moments. "**My soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord for . . . he has lifted up the lowly, scattered the proud in their conceit. . .**"

Ruby must have heard the humming too. Did it get louder after Jonathan died? The girl Mr. Coleman tried to shoot on the storefront steps went on to sow so many, many seeds for human good. She earned degrees from Tuskegee Institute, Manhattanville College, and Princeton University, opposed US wars, and worked for racial, sexual and class reconciliation. Raised in the Black church, she became a Marxist and held the materialist view until she wept in big sorrow one day and realized the most lasting revolutions happen within the heart. She got a Masters in Divinity at the same seminary Jonathan attended. Guilt is not what Ruby felt after he died, she said, but a commitment to the "living theology" he represented. A nationally acclaimed speaker and social critic, she, like the Catholic Worker co-founders Dorothy Day and Peter Maurin, speaks out against systems that dehumanize — our capitalist technocracy, the "culture of whiteness" — and she believes in redemption. For everyone.

Tens of thousands of telecommunications cables criss-cross the oceans of our planet. They hum unseen, hundreds of miles long, some laid as deep as Mt. Everest is tall. Maybe radical love is like those deep-water lines, or a cosmic game of telephone, God sending out a bajillion messages across time and space waiting for some to catch our ear. The transmissions persist and not even an early, unfair death can silence them.

After Keene, New Hampshire buried their heroic seminarian, they named an elementary school in his honor. In 1991, the Episcopal Church declared John Myrick Daniels a martyr. The statues and awards memorializing his witness increase with the passing years, and Hayneville, Alabama has become the site of an annual pilgrimage. On August 20th, the day of Jonathan's murder, pilgrims process from the courthouse to the site of the old jail to Cash Grocery Store, now razed, then return to pray at the courthouse, the same one where a jury once acquitted Mr. Coleman. It is not only Jonathan whom the marchers remember on that day, but all the Alabama martyrs, known and unknown, who died in the struggle for civil rights. Every year, a local journalist noted, the number of pilgrims increases. Ω




## Catholic Worker Calendar

**April 2 — Good Friday Stations of the Cross:** Please join us for our annual procession through our neighborhood to recognize ways in which Christ continues to suffer and love today. Gather on the porch of 52 Mason Street at 1 PM. Please wear a mask. Bread and soup will be offered afterwards.

**May 5 & 19 - Evening Prayer**: Please join us in prayer in the back yard of 52 Mason Street (weather permitting). Please wear a mask. Refreshments to follow. 6:30 PM

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**CATHOLIC** **RADICAL**

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*Founded in 1933 by Dorothy Day and Peter Maurin, the Catholic Worker is a lay movement serving the poor while denouncing injustice and proclaiming peace. We are not tax exempt. We rely entirely on the generosity of our supporters to meet our expenses. We welcome volunteers, letters, poetry, articles, artwork, and donations.*

# The Co-Pilot

Newest Spoof of America's Oldest Catholic Newspaper

*Just Be and Frown Not*

April 1, 2021


## Merciful Mystery Tour

After sitting down together to prayerfully read the entire Bible and Pope Francis' encyclicals *Laudato Si* and *Frattelli Tutti*, formerly right-wing Catholics are singing a new song, quite literally. They are putting on a musical review of re-worked Beatles' classics to express their feelings.

Archbishop Carlo Maria Viganò, who used to insist that Francis step down, opens the show with:

*We're so sorry, Pappa Francis. We're so sorry if we caused you any pain.*

Cardinal Raymond Burke, who said at the 2020 Republican National Convention that Joe Biden is not a Catholic in good standing and should not be given Communion, now belts out:

*Oh yeah, I... owe you something, I hope you'll understand,*
*The Host's... a special something, I wanna put in your hand!*
*I wanna put it in your hand. It belongs in your hand.*

After the show, Father James Altman of LaCross, Wisconsin, who said from the pulpit that Catholic Democrats are going to hell, now croons:

*We all love a mellow jamboree.*

## Touring Once Again

After insisting in 2004 that she retired once and for all when her image on a grilled cheese sandwich sold for $28,000 on Ebay, the Blessed Virgin Mary is once again making the rounds at hospitals to comfort patients with COVID-19 and their care-givers.

When asked, "Why the comeback?," she said, "I just care too much for isolated victims and heroic healers, but I must say that if I run into any virus-denying, maskless, anti-vaxers, it'll be hard for me not to encourage my Son to put their names on the naughty list."

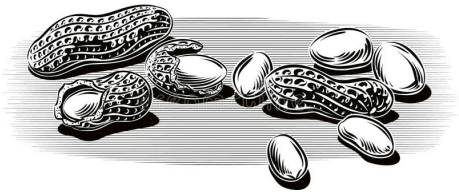
## Catholic Workers Support Black Power

In a move to simultaneously address climate change and racism, the Saints Francis & Thérèse Catholic Worker community erected solar panels to provide free electricity to its Black neighbors. With the help of many donors, the lay Catholics bought an empty Mason Street lot, filled it with dozens of solar panels, and connected 10 houses to the new grid.

When asked about the project, Claire Schaeffer-Duffy said, "My ancestors owned slaves. That fact and reading James Baldwin, Toni Morrison, and Bernard Lafayette jolted my conscience. Increasing Black power is the least I can do."

Her husband Scott said, " Now can we get a guilt-free, plug-in electric car?" Claire replied, "If you stop tracking dirt inside the house, maybe."

## Justice & Nuts



Catholic institutions, inspired by the New Testament and various papal encyclicals, promised to pay all employees a living wage, as high as $35 an hour, while overpaid administrators and CEOs will be compensated with peanuts.

Boston's Cardinal Sean O'Malley described the program as a way to reduce the wealth gap. He said, "I've long thought the elite's salaries were nuts, so why not pay them with legumes?"

Hourly wages for janitors, grounds keepers, nurses aides, orderlies, cafeteria workers, and others, will be adjusted automatically as economic conditions change. When their jillion-dollar offshore bank accounts get depleted, corporate executives, like the suffering servants they have long claimed to be, will start off receiving the hourly wages they used to pay new workers. Nuts and apple cider will be free thereafter for everyone.

# Change

(Continued from Page 1)

counterparts.

In East Jerusalem, which Israel annexed in 1967, the 350,000 or so Palestinians who live there are defined as permanent residents of Israel – a revocable status that allows them to live and work in Israel, receive social benefits and health insurance, and vote in municipal, but not national, elections.

In the West Bank, over 2.6 million Palestinians live in dozens of disconnected enclaves under rigid military rule, and are denied political rights.

In the Gaza Strip, about 2 million Palestinians are also denied political rights. In 2005, Israel withdrew its forces and dismantled its settlements; in 2007, Hamas seized control. Since then, Israel has held Gaza under blockade while controlling almost every aspect of life from outside.

In each of these territorial units, Israel decides which rights to grant Palestinians. In not one of them are they granted the same rights as Jews.

The regime employs several methods to promote Jewish supremacy.

Israel works to "Judaize" the entire area, treating land as a resource chiefly meant to benefit the Jewish population. Jewish communities are established and developed, while Palestinians are dispossessed and corralled into small, crowded enclaves.

Since 1948, Israel has taken over 90% of land within its sovereign territory and built hundreds of Jewish communities, yet not one for Palestinians (with the exception of several communities built to concentrate the Bedouin population, after dispossessing them of most of their property rights).

Since 1967, Israel has also enacted this policy in the Occupied Territories, dispossessing Palestinians of more than 2,000 kilometers on various pretexts. In violation of international law, it has built over 280 settlements in the West Bank (including East Jerusalem) for more than 600,000 Jewish citizens. It has devised a separate planning system for Palestinians, designed primarily to prevent construction

B'TSELEM

and development, and has not established a single new Palestinian community.

Jews living anywhere in the world, their children and grandchildren – and their spouses – are entitled to immigrate to Israel and receive citizenship, even if they choose to live in the Occupied Territories.

Palestinians who live in other countries cannot immigrate to the Israeli-controlled areas – even if they, their parents or their grandparents were born and lived there. Their only option is to marry a person who already holds status in these areas.

Palestinians who live in one territorial unit have difficulty obtaining status in another. According to Israeli law, Palestinians from the Occupied Territories cannot receive permanent status in Israel or East Jerusalem even if they marry Israelis.

Israel allows its citizens and residents – Jews and Palestinians alike – free passage between the units, with the exception of entering Gaza, which is defined as "hostile territory," and (formally) entering areas in the West Bank ostensibly under PA [Palestinian Authority] responsibility.

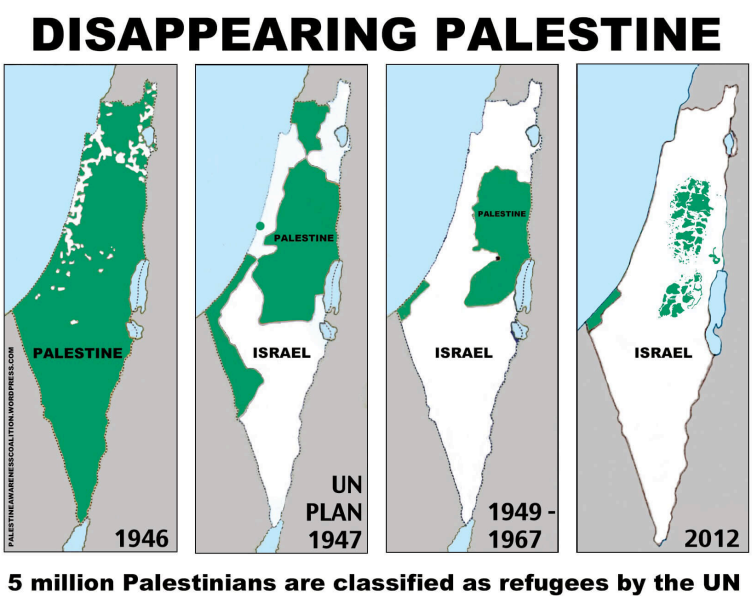
Palestinians in the West Bank or Gaza need a permit to travel between the units. Israel has held Gaza under blockade since 2007, prohibiting movement in or out except for rare cases it defines as humanitarian.

All Israeli citizens can leave and re-enter the country at any time.

Palestinian subjects cannot usually fly abroad from Israel's international airport and need an Israeli permit to get to the airport in Jordan.

Israeli citizens – whether Jewish or Palestinian – can participate in national politics, including voting and running for office. However, leading politicians consistently undermine the legitimacy of Palestinian political representatives.

The roughly 5 million Palestinians who live in the Occupied Territories (including East Jerusalem) cannot participate in the political system that governs their lives and determines their future. While most can theoretically vote for the PA , its powers are symbolic and subordinated to Israel.




Palestinian subjects are denied not only the right to vote but other political rights, such as freedom of speech or association, and are forbidden from criticizing the regime or organizing and working towards social and political change.

The territory between the Jordan River and the Mediterranean Sea is governed by a single regime that works to maintain Jewish supremacy.

To that end, Israel has divided the area and the Palestinians into several distinct units. In each one, Palestinians are granted a different set of rights, which is never equal to the rights granted to Jews.

This policy, which denies Palestinians

a slew of rights including the right to self-determination, is achieved by engineering space geographically, demographically, and politically. This includes: Granting citizenship to any Jew in the world and their relatives, and generally withholding it from Palestinians; seizing land and allocating it to Jews while confining Palestinians in small, crowded enclaves; restricting Palestinian movement; and excluding millions of Palestinians from effective political participation.

A regime that uses laws, practices and organized violence to establish and maintain the supremacy of one group over another is an apartheid regime. This did not emerge overnight but took shape gradually, over time. The accumulation of measures, which receive public and judicial support and are enshrined in both practice and law, points to the conclusion that the bar for defining Israel as an apartheid regime has been met.

In recent years, the Israeli regime has grown increasingly explicit regarding its Jewish supremacist ideology. This process culminated with the enactment of Basic Law: Israel – the Nation State of the Jewish People, which declares the distinction between Jews and non-Jews fundamental and legitimate, and permits institutional discrimination in land management and development, housing, citizenship, language, and culture.

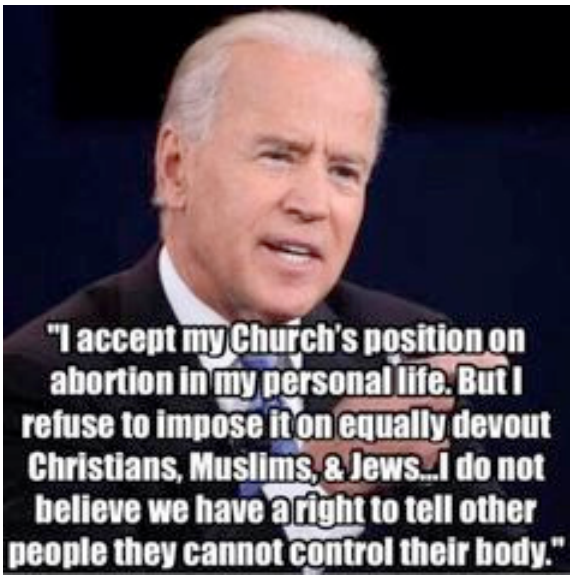
Meanwhile, official statements regarding formal annexation of more parts of the West Bank attest to Israel's long-term intentions to achieve permanent control over the land.

This is a call for change. It is impossible to fight injustice without naming it: apartheid.

It is painful to look reality in the eye, but more painful to live under a boot. That is why a determined struggle for a future based on human rights, liberty, and justice is more vital now than ever before. The reality described here is harsh, yet we must remember: people created this regime, and people can replace it.

There are various political paths to a just future here, between the Jordan River and the Mediterranean Sea, but all of us must first choose to say: "No To Apartheid." Ω

# Letter to President Biden


"I accept my Church's position on abortion in my personal life. But I refuse to impose it on equally devout Christians, Muslims, & Jews...I do not believe we have a right to tell other people they cannot control their body."

Dear President Biden, February 2, 2021

Peace! I am a member of the Catholic Worker, a lay movement which shelters the homeless and promotes peace and justice. You heard our co-founder, Dorothy Day, praised by Pope Francis when you sat behind him at the pontiff's 2015 address to Congress. Like the pope, our movement has no army or jails with which to compel people toward our ideals. As Dorothy Day said, ours is "a revolution of the heart."

I am writing to you today because, like myself, you are a practising Catholic. As such, I enthusiastically endorse your efforts to halt the death penalty, address the climate emergency, oppose systemic racism and sexism, welcome immigrants and refugees, and reduce economic inequality through a living wage and affordable healthcare. I am concerned, though, about your approach to abortion.

As you know, most Americans do not favor abortion on demand. Concerns abound about late-term abortions, abortions by minors, sex-selection abortions, abortions of the differently-abled and mentally-challenged, and the euphamization of abortion as a component of "reproductive health." Evidence exists that a more economically-just and family-friendly society, one which also confronts rape, incest, and male sexual irresponsibility, reduces abortion. As Peter Maurin, the co-founder of the Catholic Worker, said, we have to "build a society where it's easier to be good." Christ's call to complete nonviolence, to embracing the Cross with faith in resurrection, however, demands heroic courage. The choice to reject abortion in the most difficult circumstances, increases if people hear the good news of nonviolence and know that there is a community which will stand by them in their struggle.

So, I hope and pray that you will embrace the seamless garment respect for life Pope Francis champions. You needn't overturn *Roe v Wade*, but you can speak out in defense of unborn life within a context of respect for women and responsible sexuality. Silence on the death of the unborn diminishes your stature and is fuel for your Catholic critics.

As I did with the previous president, I will pray for you to become the saint that God created you to be.

Scott Schaeffer-Duffy

# A Great Loss

Dorothy Sue Malone died unexpectedly on February 5, 2021 at 88 years old. She was a dear friend, spouse, mother, grandmother, peace activist, church organist, and registered nurse. She joined Catholic Workers for many demonstrations and was arrested with us in a protest against nuclear weapons. She and her husband Jim, who survived her, were faithful supporters of Saints Francis and Thérèse Catholic Worker.

In 1997, Sue's best friend Eleanor Pepper and her husband John were brutally murdered by their son Michael, who struggled with mental illness. After Michael was sentenced to confinement for criminal insanity, Sue became one of his few regular visitors. Her compassion, understanding, and forgiveness were extraordinary.

Every year just before Christmas, Sue came to Mason Street with delicious, homemade gingerbread figures for all of us. Apparently, she made more than 300 of these beautiful, seven-inch long, gingerbread men and women decorated with individual people's names. Sue brought them to the doors of homeless shelters, needful people, and friends.

She was tirelessly good humored and passionate about the need for Catholic reform. Her passing saddens us greatly. As per her wishes, her obituary in the *Worcester Telegram* ended with a request for donations to Pax Christi USA, 415 Michigan Avenue, NE, Suite 240, Washington, DC 20017 Ω

# Letters

Claire / Scott,
I read every word in your good and interesting Feb.-March newsletter. But the words that hit like a ton of bricks were in Jim Consedine's reflection: "... 50% of US Catholics voted for Trump... many US Catholic bishops supported Trump."

If we are very honest with ourselves, this indicates that many Catholic men are "white supremacists" and to extrapolate further, many Catholics were in that raging mob at the Capitol on January 6th.

What does this say about a religion that deems women unfit to be equal leaders in our Church? And punishes only women involved in abortions, but never calls out the men who are the cause of that pregnancy? And turns a blind eye to Catholics who vote for an execution-favoring President?

Where is our outrage about these fellow Catholics? Where are the true-Catholic writers brave enough to face the terrible results from faulty dogma, doctrine, and negative psychology undermining the Church Jesus founded?

**Jan Leary, Ph.D.**
**Natick, Massachusetts**

*Editor's Note: The following is a letter by Scott Schaeffer-Duffy which* The Catholic Free Press*, did not print.*

*The January 8, 2021 editorial by Rev. Kenneth Baker SJ, "Why women cannot be ordained," argues that Scripture and tradition render the ordination of women an impossibility.*

*He ignores the fact that the Body of Christ first came to earth on Christmas Day through the Virgin Mary with absolutely no intervention from a man. He is correct that Jesus chose 12 male apostles, but does not mention that he also chose twelve circumcised Jews, a limitation that Saint Paul objected to and was overturned at the first Council of Jerusalem. Fr. Baker also neglects to say that Jesus never declares his apostles to be priests. He also fails to cite John 4:1-42 where Jesus chose a Samaritan woman to proclaim the Gospel, and that only the women disciples stood by Jesus to the end and brought the news of the resurrection to the doubtful male apostles. He disregards the fact that there were women deacons in the early Church. He ignores Galatians 3:28, where Saint Paul proclaims, "...* ***there is no male or female, for you are all one in Christ****.." He forgets that every single baptized Christian is proclaimed "a priest, prophet, and king." He also claims that the proponents of women's ordination are only "a few nuns and laywomen," but I can tell you that many men and virtually everyone, male and female, under thirty has come to abhor the sexist notion that women can be excluded from what they believe is their vocation.*

*If the Catholic Church, which I dearly love, is not only to endure, but to become more faithful to God who loves every single one of us equally, She must ordain women. And, in deference to the fact that Saint Peter, the rock upon which Christ built the Church, was married, the Church should also accept married priests.*

Dear Catholic Radical,
I wish to join the discussion about why I am no longer a Catholic.

I was planning to be a Benedictine monk. I left at the end of my novitiate. I soon learned that a large percent of the monks were homosexual. That was okay because I am also, but I did not like their attempts to seduce me, three of them tried, that was not purpose of our being there.

I was also surprised to learn many of them smoked. One of my early tasks was to take the trash out. Each week, there would be a large number of empty liquor bottles. One of our fathers made the newspaper, after he was found dead in a motel room, after some weird sexual exploit went wrong. Another two fathers, separately, drove abbey cars while drunk and killed people. This was hushed up both inside and outside the monastery. There were no problems for them, a perk for being a priest in the mid-1970's. I had a friend who was a Franciscan based in Washington, DC. He left that order when he found out his brothers, based in the Holy Land to protect the holy places, were routinely buying sexual favors from Palestinian boys. Another priest bought

a large home with a pool. His superiors did not seem to care. He regularly had sex parties around the pool. He made the papers for molesting a patient where he was chaplain.

And these things go on because the Church refuses to admit it has these kinds of problems. Sweeping it under the rug is a long established practice. Even now, the local archbishop is doing everything he can to block more records of clergy abuse reaching the public. In college, at age 20, a chaplain got me drunk and attacked me. I fought him off and none of my fellow students would believe it happened.

At the monastery, about half the monks were well-educated. Many of them did not have a high opinion of the Church and kept a low profile. Others were stuck in pre-Vatican II and overly pious in sickening ways. Many Catholics grow up with inordinate guilt around sexuality, and passed this on to their children.

I hold the Church responsible for the mess in Latin America. Between It and the Crown, who ruled side by side, democracy was never promoted, while corruption and dictatorship were. They are responsible for these failing societies ruled by corrupt officials and drug lords, from which millions are trying to flee. Ireland is one of the few countries with a long history of dominance by the Catholic Church that today seems to have a healthy democracy. Most do not. The Church supported Hitler, Mussolini, and Franco. In the case of the latter, before the civil war, the Spanish were so fed-up with Church corruption Mass attendance was down to 3%. Franco thanked the Church for its support by imposing a fine for not attending Mass. Attendance went up.

Need I say anything about the Church's horrible history with the Jews? In many cases, Catholic officials helped with the round-up and helped several notorious criminals escape to South America.

As long as Church governance remains as it is, where the laity has no meaningful power, other than voting with their feet, nothing of substance will change. Prophetic and visionary people are not allowed. The main mission of the Church is to preserve itself. The Good News is secondary.

A few Christmases ago, I went back to Mass to see if anything had changed since Pope Francis. The homily was pathetic. The packed church of about 2,000 sounded like 120. Most people stood around doing nothing, like a bunch of sheep. It could have been 50 years earlier, pre-Vatican II, when people thought showing up was all they had to do. I have never been back.

**Norman G. Leaf**
**Bellingham, Washington**

*Editor's Note: The writer cites horrible behavior by Catholic clergy and Church complicity with dictatorships and anti-Semitism. We would add to that list Church complicity with war, racism, and sexism. We agree that none of these wrongs should be swept under a rug.*

*We must say, though, that we have met a great many holy lay and ordained Catholics. Much of our financial support comes from selling bread in parishes with fine homilies, excellent music programs, empowered male and female laity, peace and justice commitments, and service to the needful. All of them proclaim Scripture and offer the Eucharist. We see the Catholic Church as a combination of holiness and worldliness, but find that this can be said about ourselves too.*

*Dan Berrigan, SJ., used to say, "The Church is a whore, but she's still our mother." It's a tough metaphor, but captures the sinful aspect that needs resistance along with the bond which runs deep.*

*Dorothy Day drew the strength to live a holy life in the pre-Vatican II Church. She voted with her feet. The Second Vatican Council defined the Church as the People of God, challenging us to define it by our personal example. Please keep us in your prayers as we try to reflect the love of God.*

Hi, Scott,

Got my first vaccination — scheduled for my next in three weeks. Things are starting to re-open and some restrictions are being rescinded. Dare we hope? Yes, hope springs eternal. Perfect timing — Lent, Resurrection, and Spring coming soon to a town near us!!

**Tom Malloy**
**East Providence, Rhode Island**

# Teen Voices

*Editor's Note: After seeing the documentaries* Dorothy Day: Don't Call Me a Saint, *and* Skid Row Marathon, *about Superior Court Judge Craig Mitchel, two teenage students in a class on homelessness taught by Scott Schaeffer-Duffy offered these reflections.*

When watching the movie, *Skid Row Marathon*, I thought about how amazing Judge Mitchell is. He forgave a convicted murderer, and now he's best friends with him. Mitchell showed his love and confidence for all of the Skid Row victims by taking them on international trips.

Both Judge Craig and Dorothy Day have made a bigger impact on homelessness than the government, which is great, but the government really needs to step up to the plate and help minorities.

If I were the President of the United States, I would make homeless "parks," large parking lots with dedicated spaces for cars, tents, recreation, and food. The food area would include running water, a microwave, a refrigerator, two tables with chairs, and a daily re-stock of food. The recreation area would have a basketball hoop, soccer, and a playground. There would also be a bathing center, with showers, and bathrooms that were cleaned daily. The homeless would be hired along with others to clean and supervise the area.

**Malachi**

I like how the judge has a good heart and always gives a second chance. I also like how he tries to understand each person and motivates them with the chance to run marathons around the world.

Another thing that moved me was how the homeless and criminals handled every situation. I would have given up. The people always stayed together and never stopped pushing. It showed you always have a chance.

If I was confronted by a beggar, I'd give him some money if I had some.

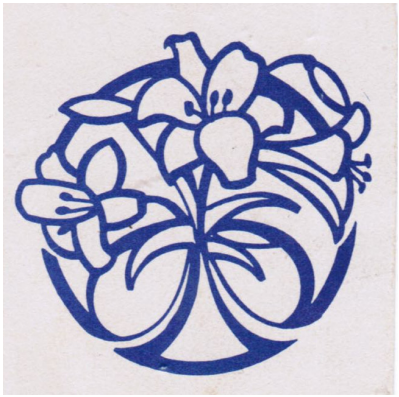
Dorothy Day's civil disobedience showed she was not with the nonsense. She was willing to go extra lengths for what is right.

**Brian**

# Mason Street Musings

It was late January when I finally removed the Christmas wreath from the front door and dumped it on the back porch. Seeing the evergreen lying in the bright light of spring the other day startled me. Was it March already? In the time warp of COVID, the past year feels short and long. I remember those early days of the pandemic as if they were yesterday. *Mr. Rogers and Me* was the last movie Scott and I saw in a theater before the shutdown. After that excursion, our world shrank quickly, so much so that driving downtown felt like foreign travel. Daily briefings from Massachusetts Governor Charlie Baker became a staple of afternoon radio. Number of people infected. Number of people who have died. Everything felt fragile and ominous. I thought about death a lot. Not so bad if it happened to me, but what about the people I loved? Scott, our children and their spouses, our grandchildren, my siblings and in-laws, all those nieces and nephews, fellow Catholic Workers, our friends. . . The net of connections expands as you get older.

Early in the pandemic, Scott and I began attending daily Mass with Pope Francis. Every morning at 8:30, I would light a candle on the kitchen table, flip open my laptop, and click us into Casa Santa Marta the modern, chapel adjacent to St. Peter's Basilica in Rome. We became familiar with



the chapel's airy interior, its tabernacle shaped like the sun, the potted ZZ plants beside the altar, and Sr. Bernadette's wide mid-western accent translating the pope's words. *Today, we remember all those in prison during this time of pandemic*.

The pope provided a steadying presence. That Mass connected us to the larger world and reminded us we were not alone. We stayed in Rome through Lent and much of Easter and heard the pope deliver his extraordinary *Urbi et Orb*i St. Peter's Square, where I stood amidst a throng two years ago, looked terribly abandoned. Not a human being in sight.

It's been an extraordinary year, the reverberations of which will continue for a long time. I pray I don't forget the lessons learned. I no longer carry the anxiety of those first months. Seeing Death perched in the door way can paradoxically make you less afraid and more free to savor all of life's goodness and beauty. I have come to realize that in times of uncertainty and social upheaval, the works of mercy and peace remain a constant. How grateful I am to be part of a movement that demonstrates this truth in a thousand ways. I think of our beloved friend Mike Benedetti faithfully serving the soup at Worcester's Mustard Seed Catholic Worker and of the indefatigable Kathy Kelly, still speaking out against our endless wars here on the 18th anniversary of the US invasion of Iraq.

Meanwhile the spring light lengthens. Schools are slowly re-opening and Mohammed, who has been here since October, is happy to be back at work driving a school bus. A raucous crow has taken up residence in the ash tree behind the house, and four-year old Theo and I have a new habit of buying blueberry muffins at a cafe that bears his name. He recently discovered the joy of putting on a magic show after his mother made him a black top hat out of cardboard. Theo the Great Magician, who makes many things disappear, has become famous in the living rooms of his parents and grandparents, so it was only natural for him to ask, "Do you think they heard about my magic show and named the café after me?"

Next week, men from Monster Energy will install our final set of high efficiency heat pump heaters. "52 Mason Street will be off fossil fuels by Good Friday," Scott says. Thanks to all who made this conversion possible. Blessed Easter, everyone. **Claire**

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